

MARVEL

505

WAID
PORTER
RAPMUND

**AUTHORITATIVE
ACTION PART 3**

FANTASTIC FOUR[®]



HARRIS & FEISTER

THE FANTASTIC FOUR

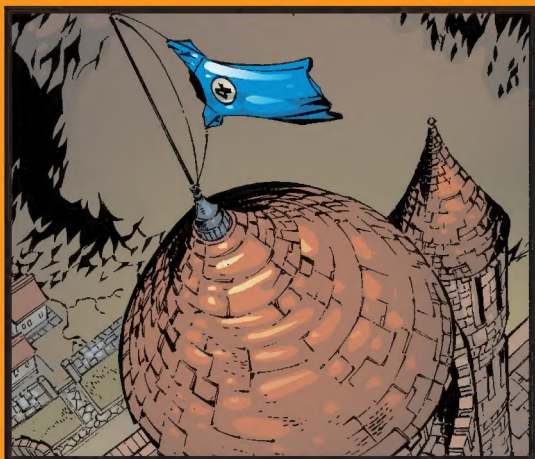
1 A team—and a family—of adventurers, explorers and imagonauts, the Fantastic Four lead lives both ordinary—and extraordinary. As of today:

2 For years, the small European nation of Latveria has been under the tyrannical rule of Victor Von Doom. Recently, Reed Richards banished Doom to Hell in a climactic battle that left

3 Reed's face scarred—

—and left the citizens of Latveria without government and without protection from neighboring nations. When Reed took his team to Doom's abandoned castle to dispose of its weapons, he saw a country on the brink of chaos. Reed appointed himself monarch—

4 —without consulting the populace, the United Nations...or his own family.



STAN LEE PRESENTS

"AUTHORITATIVE ACTION"

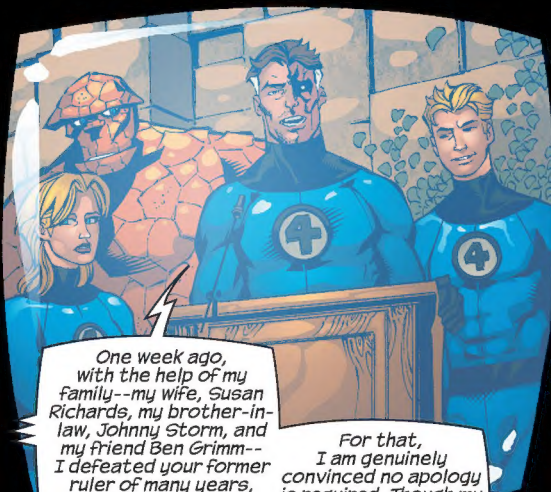
Part
3 of 6



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the ultimate authority



Citizens of Latveria, good evening. My name is Dr. Reed Richards, and I owe you an apology.

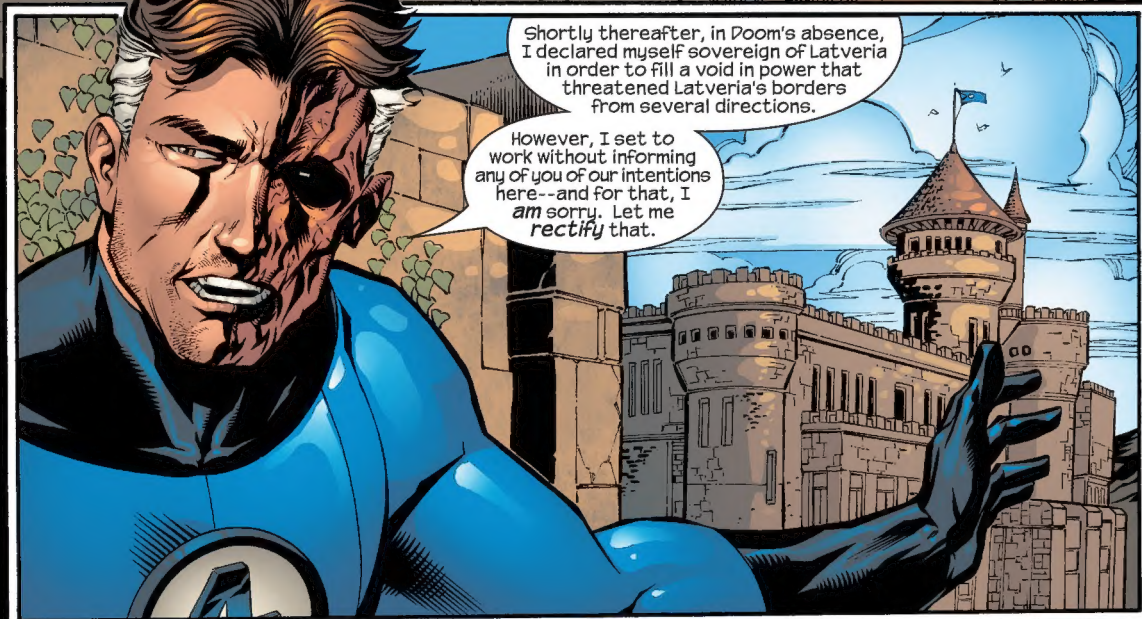


One week ago, with the help of my family--my wife, Susan Richards, my brother-in-law, Johnny Storm, and my friend Ben Grimm--I defeated your former ruler of many years, Victor Von Doom, in final combat.

For that, I am genuinely convinced no apology is required. Though my family and I believe unequivocally in the sanctity of human life--




--there can be no question that the world is better off without that one man, given the pain and suffering he gleefully inflicted--and would have continued to inflict--upon any people or nation who dared oppose his tyrannical reign of cruelty.



Shortly thereafter, in Doom's absence, I declared myself sovereign of Latveria in order to fill a void in power that threatened Latveria's borders from several directions.

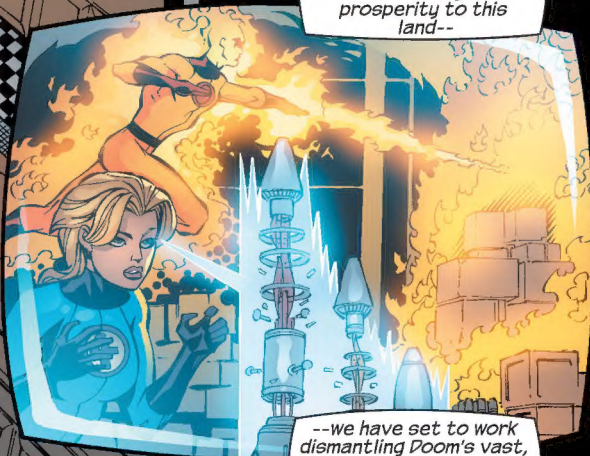
However, I set to work without informing any of you of our intentions here--and for that, I am sorry. Let me rectify that.



Despite what I'm sure Doom has told you repeatedly, we come to you in peace and utter benevolence, without one single purpose other than to make your lives better.



Already, we have genetically-- and safely--refertilized fields and planted crops that will bring new prosperity to this land--

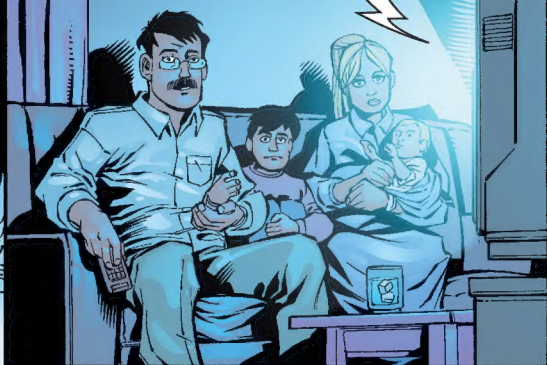


--we have set to work dismantling Doom's vast, hidden cache of weapons of mass destruction, the very existence of which threatens the lives of all Latverians--



--and we have begun impounding Doom's squadron of hidden robot police, the remorseless clockwork machines who enforced Doom's laws without mercy.

No one should have to live in fear. No children should have to worry that their parents will be dragged off into the night simply for the crime of displeasing a mad dictator.



That need no longer be. Our only objective is to create a climate of freedom. Our only goal is to turn Doom's horrific presence into a fading memory.

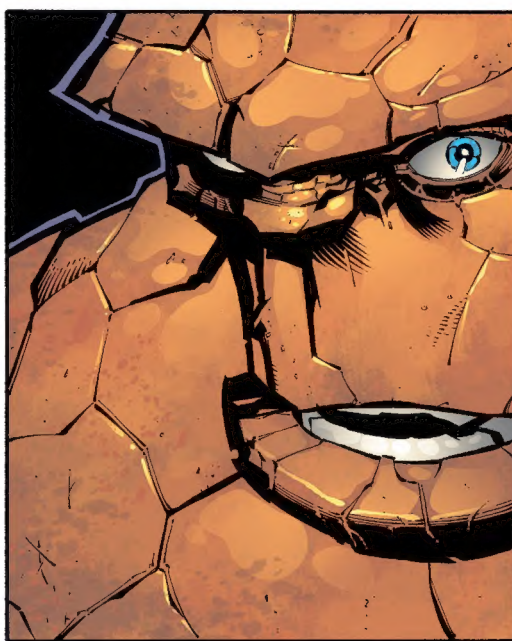
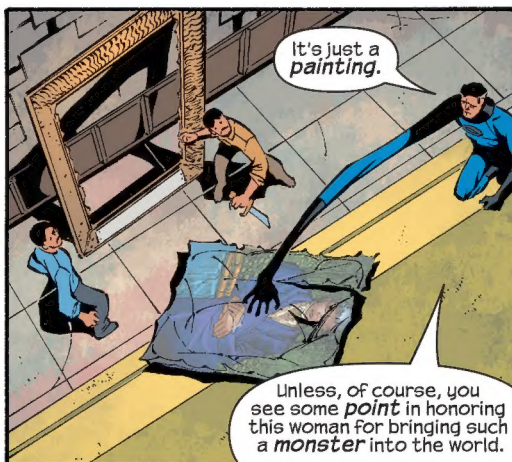
To that end, at dawn tomorrow, I will throw open the doors of this castle Doom called home--



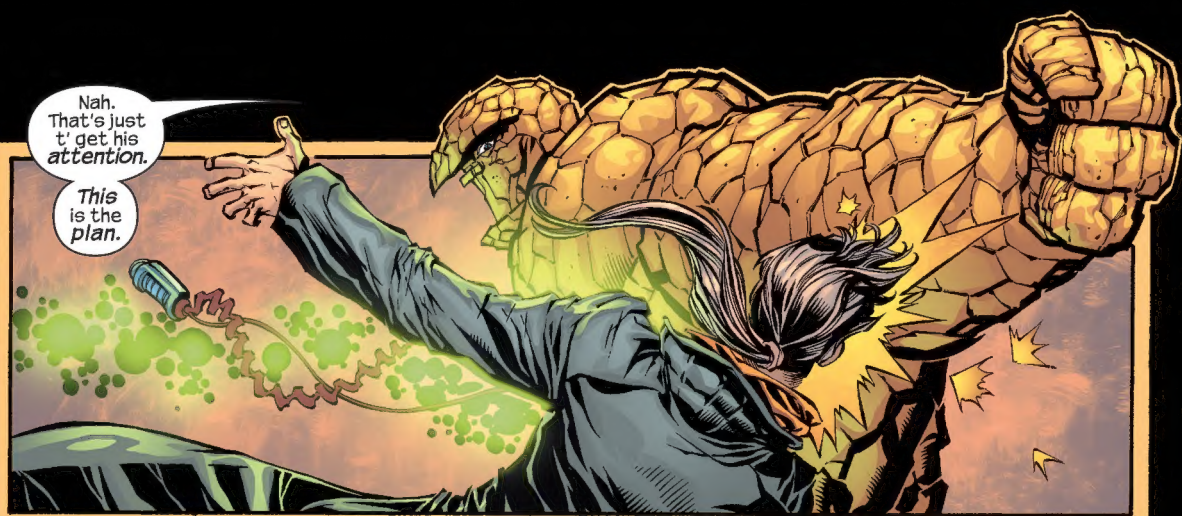
"--and invite you to help exorcise its demons."











Nah.
That's just
t' get his
attention.

This
is the
plan.



MOMENTS LATER...

What
is that
thing?

Wakandan black
market. Detonation emits a
vibranium pulse that fragments
the molecules of everyone
and everything in a fifty-
meter radius.

YOW.

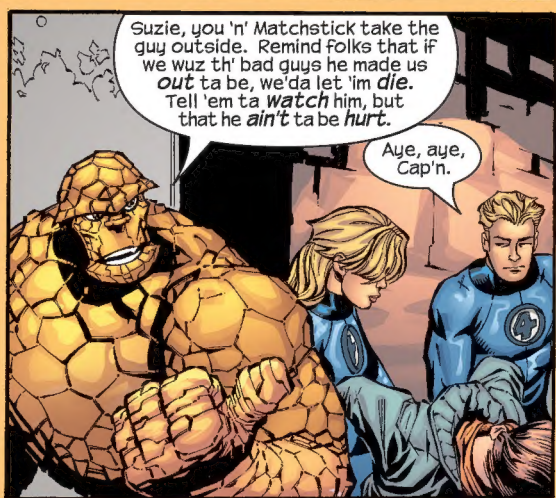
...uhhnnnnh...



Johnny, I thought
you were looking **into**
this "Resistance"!

And **you!**
You **dare** come
in here and
threaten
us?

Stretcho,
whoa! This ain't
th' way we agreed
t' **handle** this kinda
problem!



Suzie, you 'n' Matchstick take the
guy outside. Remind folks that if
we wuz th' bad guys he made us
out ta be, we'da let 'im **die**.
Tell 'em ta **watch** him, but
that he **ain't** ta be **hurt**.

Aye, aye,
Cap'n.



That's th' message we wanna
send, right? That he's lucky
we got to him 'fore the
Doombots did?

Hmm?



The Doombots.
We ain't 100% sure
we **found** 'em all
yet, ya said.

...
Oh, right.
Right.
Right...

**UNITED NATIONS
HEADQUARTERS.
NEW YORK.**

...for the last *time*, gentlemen... the United States Government *fully disavows* Dr. Richards' actions.

However, Richards is an American citizen. His transgressions on foreign soil are *ours* to deal with, not yours. The U.S. will not be *dictated* to in this matter.

Of course not. Otherwise, *other* countries *besides* America might be allowed to benefit from advanced Latverian technology!

Unacceptable! Were it Japan or India plundering Doom's machinery and weapons, the U.S. would *demand* fairness!

Mind control...chronal displacement... a superior nuclear arsenal...

Possession of any *one* of Doom's devices would catapult the U.S. from superpower to the world's *only* power.

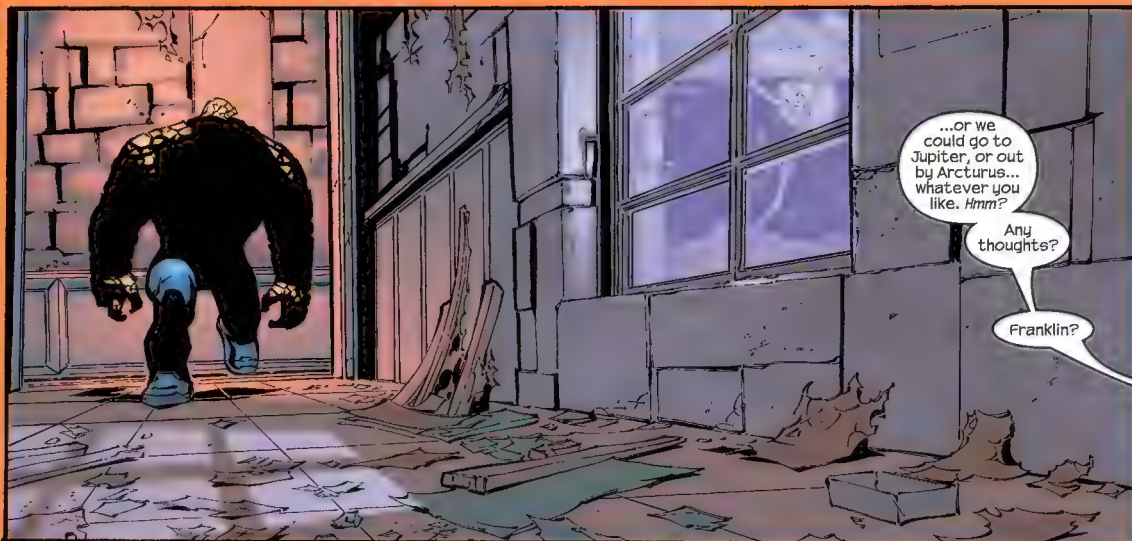
How can we fail to interpret your "hesitation" in addressing Richards' hostile invasion as anything but U.S. support?

Mr. Secretary-General...Col. Fury... we tire of *debating* this matter. Therefore, an *ultimatum*:

If the Americans do not *visibly withdraw* from Latveria within 48 hours--

--a coalition of *thirty-nine nations*, including *China* and *Russia*, will declare *war* on its self-appointed leader--

--and, quite possibly, *America itself*.



...or we could go to Jupiter, or out by Arcturus... whatever you like. Hmm?

Any thoughts?

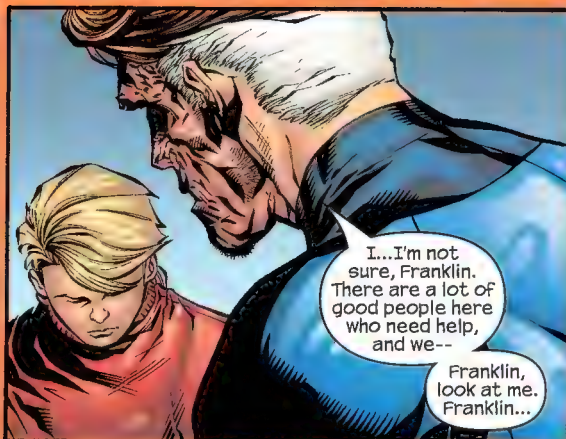
Franklin?



Well, be thinking about it, okay, champ? We won't spend your birthday here, I promise.

I know this isn't your favorite place, but Doom's not **here** anymore, so you don't have to **worry** that--

When are you an' Mommy comin' home?

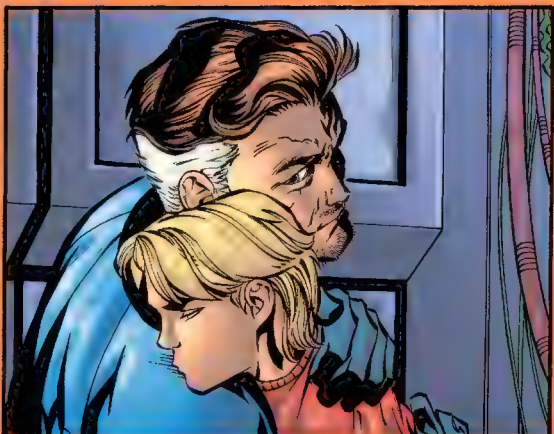
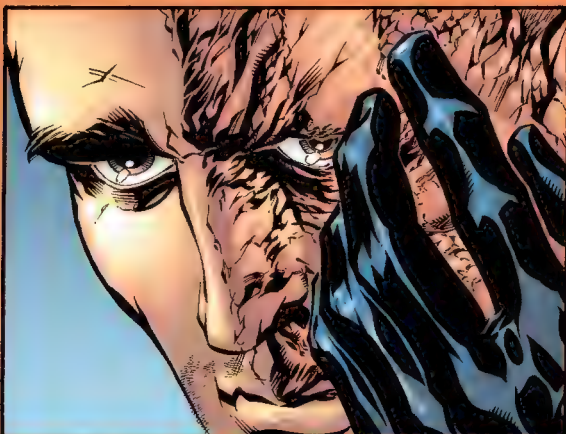


I...I'm not sure, Franklin. There are a lot of good people here who need help, and we--

Franklin, look at me. Franklin...



C'n I go now?







Th' paintin'.
What painting?

Reed knows what I'm talkin' about. It's other stuff, too.

Y'know, that was a damn good speech ya gave th' other day 'bout cleanin' up after Doom, but...

...I dunno... I still ain't completely sure y'r bein' *king* is th' way t' go.



You're suddenly against this?

Naw. I mean, not... "*suddenly*." Reed, there ain't no question yer heart's in th' right place.

And God knows, I *get it* that ya feel real strong about th' position yer takin'. But... I mean...



...so did th' guy with th' whatchamacallit Vibranium pulse thing.



You're defending him? He attacked us!

He was *deluded* into believing that we actively wished him *harm*, so he came *after* us simply to prove a *point*!

You're suggesting I treat that *lightly*? If a man tries to hurt my *family*, I will *absolutely* take him *down*!

Stop. This is *exactly* why ya got me *worried*. *Lissen t'* yourself! Yer not *talkin'* about him!



Yer talkin' about *Doom*.

Latverian on a *kamikaze* mission. In the *wrong*.
No *question*.

But ta say these people ain't used ta *political* protest is an *understatement*. It's *astoundin'* that fella was willin' ta give his *life* to say somethin'.
His *life*.

If you ain't proved him wrong yet, whose fault is *that*?

I think this Doom thing really messed ya *up*, Reed. I don't mean th' *scar*.

Yer smart enuff not ta complain--around *me*, at least--about y'r *looks*.

And I'd give *anything* f'r him not to've put the *whammy* on ya.

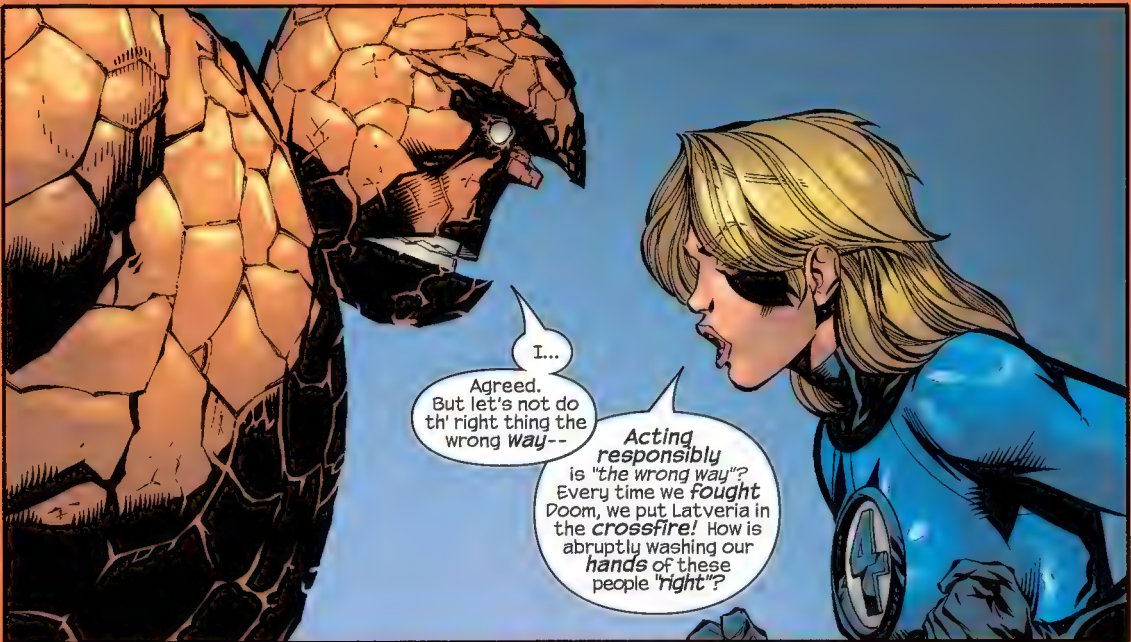
But I...

...I mean it messed ya up in th' *head*.

It "messed"---?

Ben, Doom left scars *everywhere*! He put Franklin in *Heil*! He *stole* Valeria!

If we do not use this opportunity to *pave over* everything Doom left *behind*, what's going to keep him from using all his resources *against* us if he ever *returns*? And doing *worse*?



I...
Agreed.
But let's not do
th' right thing the
wrong way--

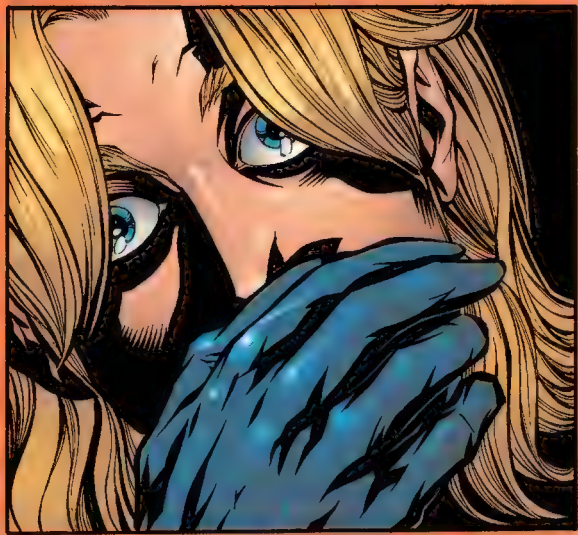
Acting
responsibly
is "the wrong way"?
Every time we fought
Doom, we put Latveria in
the crossfire! How is
abruptly washing our
hands of these
people "right"?



Because some
things ain't
our job!

Making the world *safer* is "our
job!" Doing whatever's *necessary*
to protect Franklin and
Val is "our job!"

Maybe you'd
understand that
better, Ben, if they
were *your*
children--

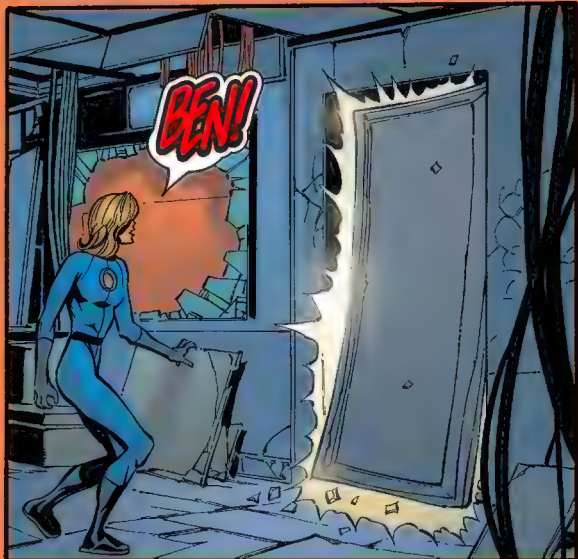


Ben, wait! I
didn't mean it
like that--!

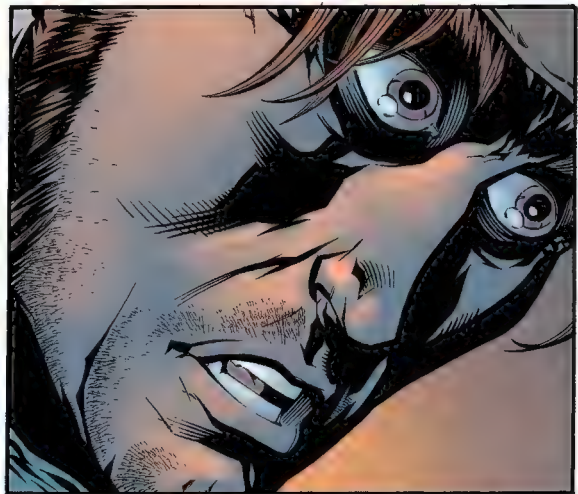
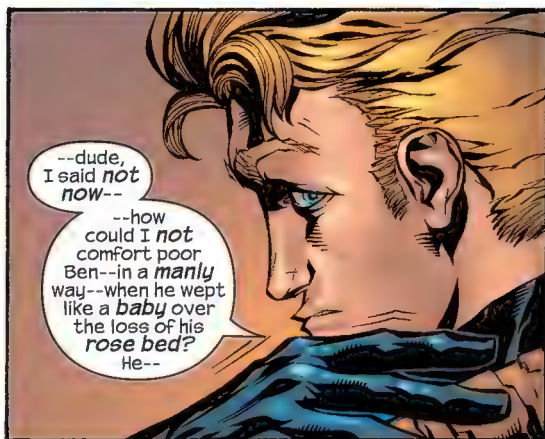
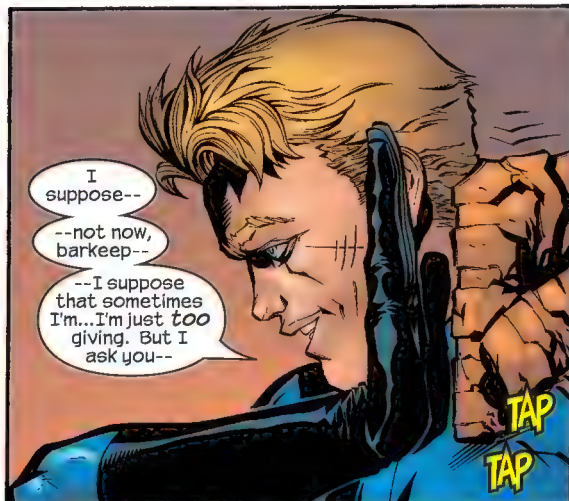
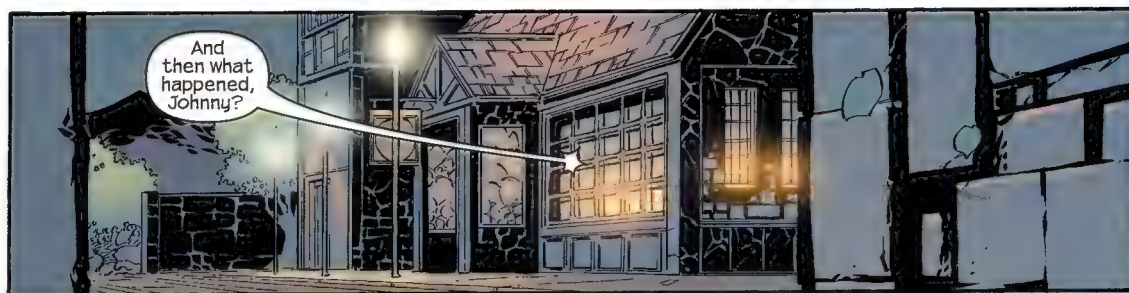
Save it. I heard ya loud
in' *clear*. I ain't *blood*,
so my opinion don't
count. Got it.

That's
not what
I--

Ben!



BEN!





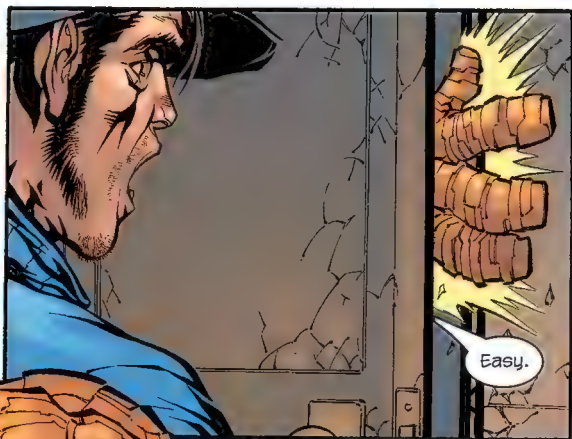
Go! Run!
They are on to
us! They could
be here any
moment!

Vladim!
What's
wrong?



Richards' men
have located
our sanctuary!

No!
How?



Easy.

Yer pal
Vladim here
led us right t' yer
door once I spotted
him in th' bar and
baited 'im.

No offense,
but you guys
got a lot t'
learn about
espionage.





Don't be frightened. We come in peace.

Vladim Norescu, provisional field corporal.

No. No. This isn't an interrogation...

Vladim Norescu, provisional field corporal!

Johnny Storm, professional lackwit! Nice to meet you!

Will you please calm down? Contrary to what Doom drummed into your heads, we are *not* the enemy! We're friends!



Vladim Norescu, provisional field corporal!

Vladim Norescu, provisional field corporal!

He's terrified of me.

Welcome to my world.

Fr the luvva Mike, all we wanna do is talk this *out*. Get 'em ta work *with* us. They want what we're givin' 'em!

Ben Grimm, Diplomat.

I ain't never been so *frustrated* in my life. It makes me wanna haul off an' *punch* somebody, but there ain't nobody ta--



DOOMBOTS!

Thank God.
What?
I said
IT'S CLOBBERIN' TIME!



Damn it!
I *told* Reed
we hadn't flushed
all these 'bots
outta hidin'!



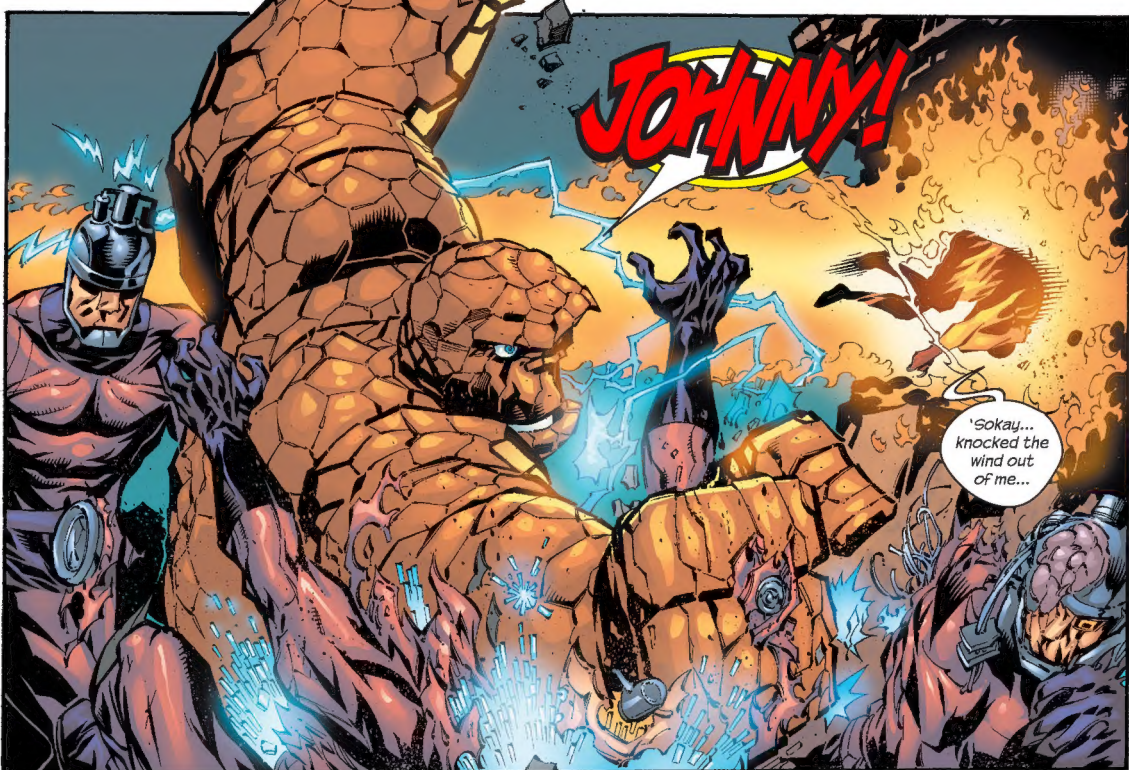
I bet
they wuz *pre-*
programmed
ta go after
any kinda
insurrection!

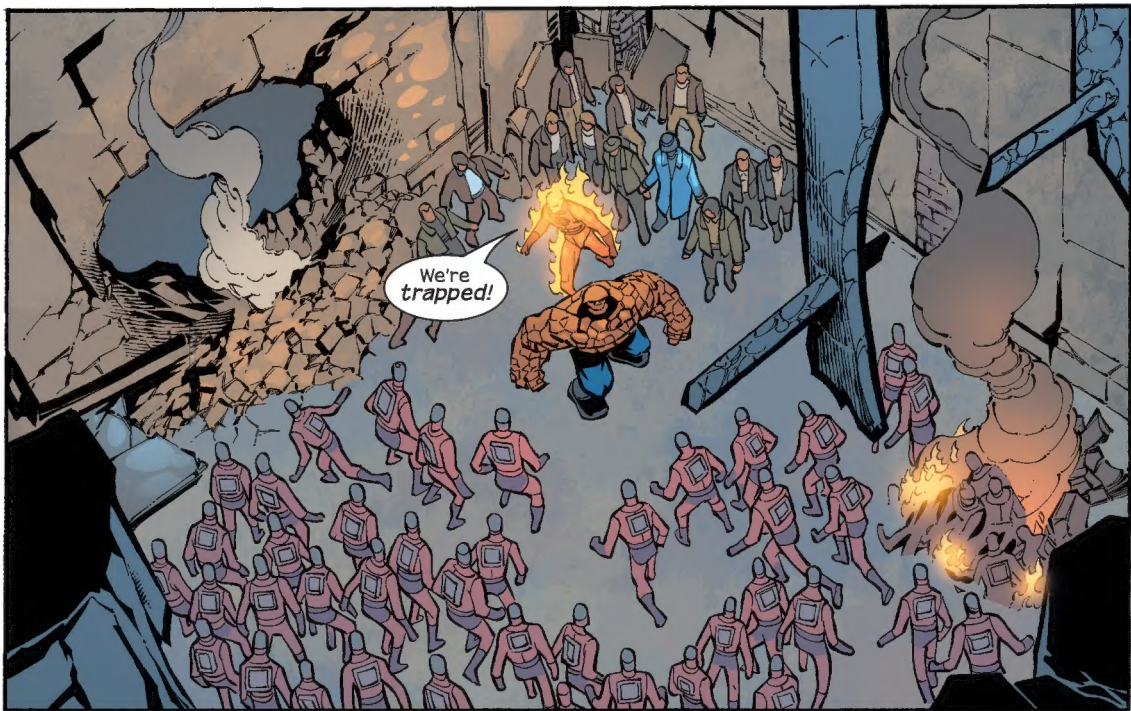
Get
these men
outta
here!



On it!
This way,
fellas!







We're trapped!



Get on th' comlink!

No good!
It's shorted out!



Lemme try mine! We gotta let the others know where we're--

gaaakk!

--where we're at 'fore it's...

koff! koff!

FSS



...too... late...!

kaff!



Reed?
Reed, c'n ya hear me...?



Reed...?

TO BE CONTINUED...